

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 8, 13, 14, and 17 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

SPECIFICATION

The specification stands objected to for certain informalities. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that the term "flushing device" should be "flashing device." Applicant has amended the specification according to the Examiner's suggestions. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-5, 8, 13-14, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner alleges that the term "flushing device" is indefinite. Notwithstanding, claims 1 and 13 have been amended to delete "flushing device" and insert therefore - - flashing device - -. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5, 8, 13-14, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 00/06491 A1 (WO '491) in view of You (U.S. Pat. No. 6,407,009), and further in view of Arai (4,571,486). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 13 have been amended to recite that the claimed drying steps are performed by vacuum drying. These amendments are supported throughout the specification and drawing as originally filed. No new matter has been added. Specifically, vacuum drying is supported, for example, in paragraph [0026] of the specification. Neither WO '491, You, nor Arai, either singularly or in combination, teach or suggest such a method. In contrast, WO '491 teaches a method wherein the substrates including the aerogel are transferred to a pressure chamber for drying (see column 5, lines 44 to 62). A pressure chamber that dries the aerogel is different than that vacuum drying the claim solidified porous layer. Because there is no teaching or suggestion in either WO '491, You, or Arai of such a step, the claimed methods of claims 1 and 13, and each corresponding dependent claim, would not have been obvious.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests

that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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